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ABSTRACT

This study had three purposes: to observe the formation and development of a teacher workgroup over the course of an academic year; to explore the connections between a teacher workgroup and the organization which supported it; and to determine the relationship between the organizational support given to the school, which was undergoing a massive restructuring program, and the dynamics of the change process. The teacher workgroup consisted of the four teachers in the theatre arts department at an urban southwestern magnet high school. Qualitative case study methodology was used to collect data. Results of the study indicate that the drama teachers did not become a cohesive workgroup during the 1990-91 school year under study. The primary reason appears to be that they were not thought of as a team, nor were attempts made to create a team. An examination of events that were instrumental in formation of the group suggests reasons why the members of the workgroup failed to coalesce as a team. The analysis is made within the theoretical framework of five evolutionary phases of group development: orientation, dissatisfaction, resolution, production, and termination. In addition, four factors stemming directly from the organization of the school itself seemed to have been instrumental in preventing the group from developing effectively. The factors were as follows: no attention to building a team; no clear establishment of limits of the team's authority and responsibility; no training or support; and unproductive leadership intervention. (IAH)

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ORGANIZATIONAL FACTORS DISRUPTING THE DEVELOPMENT OF A SELF-MANAGING GROUP OF TEACHERS

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ORGANIZATIONAL FACTORS DISRUPTING THE DEVELOPMENT OF A SELF-MANAGING GROUP OF TEACHERS

At the center of most proposals for school reform is the idea that existing power structures must be changed in order to give teachers more voice in the operation of the school (Cuban, 1984; Elmore, 1987; Fullan & Pomfret, 1977; Louis & Miles, 1990; Murphy, 1991; Sarason, 1982; 1990.) Schools have used several methods to give teachers more power. One of these has been to employ site-based management where teachers are involved in the actual governance of the school (Murphy, 1991). While site-based management has been found to be effective, there is also evidence to suggest that teachers are not as happy with this approach because it takes time away from what they see as their primary purpose--teaching (Duke, Showers, & Imber, 1980).

Another method is to restructure teaching so that teachers spend more time working together in teams or teacher workgroups. The most common of these teacher workgroups is the multidisciplinary team responsible for the learning of a core of a hundred or so students (Kasten, Short, Jarmin, 1989). Schools where multidisciplinary work teams have been employed have found that this places more emphasis on interdependent and cooperative work of teachers and increases teacher collaboration (Clark & Meloy, 1989). Working in cores, while very labor intensive, also increases teacher self-esteem and confidence (Ashton & Webb, 1986) and ultimately makes teaching more rewarding because teachers find both the work with their students and their colleagues more satisfying (Murphy, 1991).

While the multidisciplinary team is the most common type of teacher work group studied, teachers, especially those in secondary settings, already exist in another form of a teacher workgroup, the subject matter department. The role of the department in the lives of the teachers can vary widely. In many cases the teachers see the department as little more than an organization to which they belong, while their main priority is the classroom (Johnson, 1990). Teachers often associate themselves most with the department workgroup finding there common bonds with others who have similar education and background and a shared respect for the subject matter (McLaughlin & Talbert, 1990; Smith, 1985). The department can also play an important role in both the operation of the school and in the

instruction of the students. Members of departments in effective schools, for example, tend to focus on student performance seeking ways to improve student achievement. For these groups, teamwork is the key to student improvement (Smith, 1985). Colleagues in departments can exercise influence over instructional practices within the group. Department members often participate in the definition of course content, the development of curriculum, and the selection of textbooks. Departments can be involved in the hiring, socialization, and training of new members as well as with the supervision and evaluation of teachers within the department as a whole (Johnson, 1990). The high school department also serves as a powerful socializing agent creating and sustaining either a negative or a positive workplace mentality (Bruckerhoff, 1991).

Objectives of the Study

There were three purposes for this study. First, this study proposed to observe the formation and development of a teacher workgroup over the course of a full school year. The group was composed of the four teachers in the drama program area of the Performing Arts magnet of a large urban high school. Because two of the four teachers were new to the school, the team was expected to reform as a group and was expected to pass through recognizable stages of group development described by Lacoursiere (1980) as orientation, conflict, resolution, production, and termination stages. Since most studies of teacher workgroups and teacher workplaces have focused on already existing groups (e.g., Ashton & Webb, 1986; Kasten, Short, & Jarmin, 1989), this study offered the opportunity to watch a group as it formed. The effectiveness of the group would be determined, in part, by events that occurred during each phase and by the kinds of organizational support available to the group as it developed.

This organizational support is important because most teacher workgroups are what Hackman (1990) described as self-managing groups. Members of self-managing groups have considerable voice in their own operation, but someone outside of the group is responsible for setting up the group, giving the group structure, setting the limits of the group's authority, and providing the necessary materials and training for the group to operate effectively. A second purpose of this study, then, was to explore the

connections between a teacher workgroup, in this case a high school department, and the organization which supported it.

The school in this study was also undergoing a massive restructuring program; therefore, a third purpose of this study was to determine the relationship between the organizational support given the school and the dynamics of the change process itself. Because the school was in the third year of the reform effort, the initiation and implementation phases (Huberman & Crandall, 1983) had already taken place. It remained to be determined if these changes had been well-planned and were being effectively implemented. The school had changed the structure of the teachers' workplace in order to promote more collegiality. If these changes had been effectively institutionalized, they would be built in as part of the daily routine (Elmore, 1988; Miles, 1983); therefore, new teachers would be socialized to accept this world of collegiality. There are several powerful threats to institutionalization stemming from the loss of key personnel (Huberman & Miles, 1984), and the dynamics in the change process itself, specifically the loss of enthusiasm for the project (Louis & Miles, 1990). This study sought to determine the existence and effect these threats might have on the teacher workgroup.

Theoretical Framework

Most of the literature describing the effectiveness of workplace groups comes from the world of business (e.g., Hackman, 1990; Owens, 1991; Poza & Markus, 1980). But schools cannot be understood in quite the same way (Feiman-Nemser & Floden, 1986; Lieberman & Miller, 1984; Lortie, 1975). As Sarason (1982, 1990) pointed out, school change efforts must recognize the culture of schools when it comes to improving teaching. The most dominant barrier to change in schools stems from the pervasiveness of the norms of autonomy, independence, practicality, non-intervention, and self-reliance. These same norms can often prevent teachers from working together effectively in cohesive groups. Bird and Little (1985), Little (1982), and Rosenholtz (1989) demonstrate, however, that these norms can be replaced with the norms of collegiality and shared work only through careful and constant nurturing and support from outside personnel. Left alone or when presented with too many seemingly insurmountable problems, teachers will seek the safe haven of independence and autonomy in order to

protect threats to self esteem (Ashton & Webb, 1984; Rosenholtz, 1989). Hackman (1990) notes further that in organizations where members are used to working as individuals, as are teachers, it can be very difficult for outside managers to convince members of a workplace group that they can and should be both responsible and accountable for the actions of the group.

A group or team is distinguished from a collection of individuals by the following: (a) the presence of shared group goals, (b) mutual influence of one another through interaction and action (Wilson & Hanna, 1990), (c) interdependence of group members and the experience of a common fate (Cartwright and Zander, 1960), (d) a shared task or function of the group (Lacoursiere, 1980), and (e) identification as a member of the group (Forsyth, 1990).

One of the most important words in this description is the word *shared*. It is important that members of the group develop shared goals, tasks, and a willingness to work together to achieve them. As Wilson and Hanna (1990) point out, "A collection of people who do not experience a need to work jointly on some project does not constitute a group" (p. 6). Wilson and Hanna note further that members of a group have to put group goals ahead of individual goals in order for a group to work effectively; in other words, they have to start thinking collectively as a group and not as a collection of individuals.

Rosenholtz (1989) found that one of the strongest features of effective schools was the presence of shared goals. In schools where teachers perceive a high degree of goal consensus, they are also likely to perceive a high level of collaboration and commitment. In schools where there are ambiguous goals or multiformity of goals, Rosenholtz found that the norms of self-reliance and professional isolation are encouraged.

Bales (1950) determined that groups operate along two dimensions--*task* and *interpersonal*. Fisher and Ellis (1990) describe each:

> Task dimension refers to the relationship between group members and the work they are to perform--the job they have to do and how they go about doing it. Social dimension refers to the relationships of group members with one another--how they feel toward one another and about their membership in the group. (pp. 32-33)

To this might also be added that the *process of working* as a group is much different than working individually.

If a group is working effectively it can be expected to be both productive and cohesive (Fisher & Ellis, 1990) Put another way, an effective workplace group or team will complete its work to everyone's satisfaction. In addition, the members will not only know how to work with one another but they will also enjoy working together and will find working as a group to be rewarding in itself (Hackman, 1990).

Another characteristic of effective teacher workplaces is the presence of teacher talk or interactions geared toward teaching and learning. In high goal consensus schools, teachers spend a significant portion of their time talking about their students and how to improve their teaching. Teachers from ineffective, low-goal consensus schools spend large portions of their time avoiding talk about school except to complain or to *experience swap* by telling stories about their bad students (Rosenholtz, 1989). Rosenholtz also found that the less teachers talk professionally, the lower the faculty cohesiveness, "Isolation and cohesiveness form a continuum that describes professional estrangement on the one end and professional involvement on the other" (p. 18).

Methodology and Data Sources

Qualitative case study methodology employing what Erickson (1977) termed "focused data collection" or data that are collected through participant observation was used in this study. The study was focused primarily on the interactions and actions of the four theatre teachers over the course of a full school year. Interactions are an essential part of any group. A group, is by definition, interactive (Forsyth, 1990; Hackman, 1980; Napier & Gershenfeld, 1989). It is through interaction that the group develops its own sense of reality (Berger & Luckmann, 1967; Hackman, 1990), and socializes new members (Forsyth, 1990; Rosenholtz, 1989).

As was mentioned above, those who have studied teachers in their working relations with other teachers have noted the importance of teacher talk. As Rosenholtz (1989) said, "What is important in teachers' working lives will make itself known by its frequency of appearance or its salience in interactions" (p. 29). In schools where the typical norms of autonomy and independence are dominant,

teachers avoid talking about activities in the classroom. Their talk tends to center on such topics as personal and social plans and complaints about their students and the school (Lieberman & Miller, 1984; Rosenholtz, 1989). In schools where norms of collaboration and collegiality prevail, the teachers spend more of their time planning and producing curriculum and helping each other improve instruction (Little, 1982, 1990; Rosenholtz, 1989).

The researcher was in the field a total of 93 days, over the course of the entire 1990-91 school year, averaging 2 hours and 48 minutes per visit. Most observations took place during the 4th and 5th periods, the time set aside by the school for teacher meetings, etc. Observations included conversations between and among teachers, theatre program area meetings, meetings of the Performing Arts staff, classroom sessions, rehearsals and performances of plays, and field trips. For example, the researcher attended 20 program area meetings over the course of the year. During the year, three separate semi-structured, open-ended interviews were conducted with each teacher. Another interview was conducted with the assistant principal for the magnets and the head of staff development at the conclusion of the school year. All interviews were tape recorded and transcribed. Over 1400 pages of field notes and interview transcripts were collected for this study. Other data came from existing sources including documents prepared by the school or the school district, reports of a university research team conducting a comprehensive study in this same school, and field work by the researcher the year prior to this study.

As the first step in data analysis, the researcher read through the descriptions of all program area meetings over the course of the school year and developed a system of codes to be used with all field notes. Next, assertions were formed concerning where transitions occurred from one stage of group development to another and the role that organizational support played in the formation and dynamics of each phase. Assertions were also made concerning the effect that threats to institutionalization might have played in the formation of the group. Field note data was coded and frequency charts were made to determine the types of teacher talk found during each phase of group development. Confirming and disconfirming evidence was sought for each of these assertions (Erickson, 1986) by thoroughly searching the interview and field note data and comparing data from this study with the literature describing

effective workplace groups (e.g., Hackman, 1990), effective teacher workplaces (e.g., Rosenholtz, 1989), and the school change process (e.g., Fullan, 1982; Louis & Miles, 1990; Murphy, 1991).

In the final step, the teachers who were the focus of the study were invited to read early drafts of the report to not only confirm the author's conclusions but to also protect their confidentiality and decrease the personal risks the report might pose. A final source of confirmation came from the members of the doctoral committee who helped shape this study.

All names including all names of people, place names, and productions were changed or eliminated in the final report.

The Setting for the Study

Valley Vista Prior to the Reform Effort

The high school in which this study took place, called here Valley Vista High School, is a large urban Southwestern school in a district under court order to desegregate. To comply with the court order, the district added magnet programs to existing campuses. The first magnet at Valley Vista, The Center for the Arts, began in 1985 and contained two magnets one in Visual Arts and one in Performing Arts. The Performing Arts magnet is composed of four program areas--dance, drama, media, and music. Two other magnet programs have since been implemented one in Law and one in Aerospace Science. Funding for the magnets comes from a special tax levied by the school district over and above the base tax rate. This fund is generally referred to as "deseg money."

When Valley Vista began operation of the magnets in 1985, it had the largest minority population of any school in the district, 87.3%. The largest ethnic group of students was Hispanic at 48%. Blacks, at that time, totalled 37%, Anglos 13%, and 2% others. By 1988, all high schools in the district were in compliance with the court order except for Valley Vista. The Anglo enrollment had actually decreased to 11.1%, far short of the 25% needed for compliance.

The district determined that because Valley Vista had both a poor academic reputation and a reputation for on-campus violence, Anglo parents were reluctant to allow their children to attend Valley

Vista. The district also noted that many parents and students were unaware of the existence of the magnet programs. Action needed to be taken to improve the Valley Vista campus.

Initiation and Implementation of the Valley Vista PLAN

In 1988, the school began a large-scale restructuring program, called the Valley Vista PLAN, designed to improve academic achievement campus-wide. The school day was restructured to contain 8 periods. All teachers were assigned 3-4 classes either in the morning or in the afternoon. The rest of their day was to be used to contact parents either by phone or by home visit, to tutor students, to work with other teachers in collegial teams, and for professional development. Seventy new teachers were hired to meet the classroom needs. Teachers were given the opportunity to transfer to other campuses if they were not interested in participating in the Valley Vista PLAN. All teachers were assigned to communal office space to promote teacher collegiality. The district passed a $168 million bond election to be used to up-grade equipment and facilities in all eight high schools, including Valley Vista.

Beginning in 1989, Valley Vista placed all students in "cores" for part of the instructional day. A core is defined by the school as a block of time where two or more teachers share the same students. The 9th grade core consists of a three hour block of time for math, English, and science. In the 10th, 11th, and 12th grades, students are cored for English and social studies.

The administrative structure of the school was also revised radically. The traditional concept of the one principal was abolished and Valley Vista was set up to operate with co-principals. Additional administrators were hired along with an on-campus staff development specialist. Money was set aside for several weeks of staff development during the summer months. Faculty used these sessions principally to develop and revise curriculum. The school has also reported that these summer programs were designed to develop teacher collegiality and commitment to the school and to each other.

Role of the magnets in the Valley Vista PLAN. In order to attract more Anglo students to Valley Vista, magnet teachers were told that they should focus on recruiting and creating a quality product that will be visible in the community. In order to prevent students from dropping out, the teachers were told to spend time insuring the academic well-being of their students.

The magnet programs operated differently than the main campus. The curriculum for each program was written by the magnet teachers themselves whereas on the main campus, the teachers followed district guidelines for curriculum. The magnet programs were very well funded in order to offer students opportunities that they would not be able to get at other schools. The media program area, for example, had two fully equipped t.v. studios and a control room stocked with state-of-the-art editing and sound equipment.

Magnet teachers spend more time during the day with their students. In the Performing Arts magnet, for example, students were enrolled in 3 hour blocks of classes. The beginning students met in the morning for periods 1-3 and the advanced students met in the afternoon periods 6-8. This left periods 4 & 5 to be used for teacher meetings, contacting parents, working with students, etc. Performing Arts students attend classes on the main campus together with non-magnet students. Because many of the transfer students to Valley Vista live long distances away from the campus, most rehearsals are held during school hours as opposed to after school.

Results After the First Three Years

Results after the first few years of the implementation of the Valley Vista PLAN indicate that the school has achieved some success. The failure rate has decreased from 38.3% in 1987-88 to 14% in the spring of 1991. Absenteeism was initially reduced from 13.1% to 10.8% in 1989-90, but rose again to 12.5% in 1990-91. The most significant change has been in the dropout rate which declined from 22.2% to 10.8%. The population of the school has increased dramatically over this same period of time. At the start of the PLAN, Valley Vista had a total enrollment of 2,679, but by 1990-91 this figure had increased to 3,213, due partly to increased enrollments in the magnet programs.

A survey of the faculty in the fall of 1989 indicated that they were satisfied with the way things were working and they considered themselves a part of the Valley Vista PLAN and philosophy. They also thought that the Valley Vista campus was a safe and clean environment. During the three years since the PLAN was implemented, however, teacher satisfaction has been steadily declining. For example, 74% of the teachers reported in 1989 that they felt they played a key role in the running the

school, but this figure decreased to 52% in 1991. The teachers' perceptions of the campus as a safe and orderly environment have also decreased. Fifty-eight percent in 1989 felt that the physical plant was kept clean and neat; this figure decreased to 26.4% in 1991. The teachers initially felt that they had access to the co-principals but this perception also decreased. In January of 1991 one of the co-principals was transferred to another high school leaving Valley Vista with a single principal. The teachers now feel that they have less access to a single principal.

Results in the magnet programs. Students in the magnet programs fared better academically than the non-magnet Valley Vista students. A district report published in the summer of 1991 reported that 86% of the Performing Arts students viewed their program as being of the highest quality. The overall Arts program, combining Visual and Performing Arts, experienced a relatively low, 5.7% dropout rate. Students in the Arts also demonstrated an increase in standardized test scores.

Magnet teachers were generally more satisfied with the operation of the school, than were the non-magnet teachers. For example, 84% of the magnet teachers surveyed in 1989 reported that they felt they had a key role in running the school. In 1990 this figure decreased to 65%, but rose again in 1991 to 90%. The magnet teachers also felt that they are in charge of making decisions about what takes place in their classrooms.

Because the Anglo population in the attendance area surrounding Valley Vista was decreasing, it was decided that a lower Anglo enrollment figure would be acceptable to comply with the desegregation order. Valley Vista would need to come within 20% of the district Anglo population to comply. By the fall of 1991, the Anglo enrollment at Valley Vista reached 16.4% and that put Valley Vista in compliance with the court order.

Results

The drama teachers at Valley Vista did not become a cohesive workgroup during the 1990-91 school year. This was largely due to the fact that they did not seem to be thought of as a team, but rather as a collection of individuals, and therefore no attempt was made to create and set up a team. As

will be demonstrated below, the program area, as a group, was not given any chance to develop during the orientation or set up stage; group development was, therefore, arrested in the conflict stage. By March, three of the four did eventually create structures which would enable them to work together, but the fourth never became a part of the team. Productivity within the program area suffered and many of the older students were unhappy with their school year. As a result of the teachers' negative experiences, their level of self-confidence and self-esteem decreased. Each ended the year feeling somewhat like a failure because they had not been able to make the program area work effectively. In addition, they each felt that there was nothing they could have done to make things any better. It seems that the theatre teachers did not see themselves as a group furthermore, they not realize that they could and should be both responsible and accountable for the actions of the program area. In short, they were not empowered; in fact, the opposite seemed to be true. A closer look at the events which were instrumental in the formation of the group follows.

The Story of the School Year

Phase Theory

Fisher and Ellis (1990) note that most models used to describe the evolutionary development of groups are based on the idea that groups go through recognizable stages or phases as they form. In the first phase, the members of the group experience a period of forming or of coming together as the members adjust to both the social and the task dimensions of their group work. The middle phases are characterized by a period of social conflict and differences of opinion on task ideas and social norms. This period of social conflict and deviance is a natural and necessary part of the process. Eventually the conflicts are resolved and the group enters the final stage where members are able to perform their tasks. Phase theories also assume that this process is linear and the group will experience one phase before moving into the next. The success or failure of each successive step is in part predicted by the success of the stage which proceeded it. The following labels for the evolutionary phases of group development have been used in this study: Orientation, Dissatisfaction, Resolution, Production, and Termination (Lacoursiere, 1980).

It was initially thought that after a period of orientation, the teachers would move into the conflict stage as they began to work together on drama program area productions and that after each play, there would be more progress toward the production stage of group development. However, there was never a single production that seemed to be the province of the drama program area alone; furthermore, the group did not develop structures which would enable them to work together or productions. Therefore, a decision was made to divide the group according to natural breaks in the school year. A brief overview of the events of each phase follows:

Stage One: Orientation August 22-August 31, 1990

This stage includes the week of in-service which preceded the start of school and the first week of classes. The two new teachers (Diane and Liz) were not hired until the end of the in-service week. Most of the orienting activities took place on the Saturday before classes began and during the first week of classes. During this period the teachers met informally during the two open lunch periods. They spent a large portion of their time giving and seeking personal information about each other. The two returning teachers (Warren and Christie) spent a lot of time telling the others about how to handle paperwork and other school procedures. (See Table 1 for a description of the kinds and amount of teacher talk during each of the first four phases.)

Stage Two: Dissatisfaction September 4-December 20, 1990

Beginning the second week of classes, the teachers started to concentrate mostly on immediate task concerns--their classes, their productions, magnet activities, and school business. They stopped spending as much time getting to know one another. The informal gatherings during lunch time ceased even though no program area meetings were held until the end of September. Joe Forde, the assistant principal did not meet with the teachers until October 9. At that time he described their responsibilities for the year and made plans to begin classroom observations for teacher evaluations.

All four teachers had new roles within the program area and they spent much of their time trying to determine what their job descriptions were. Christie had moved from non-magnet teacher the year before to teaching the beginning magnet students. Warren taught one non-magnet class and served

Table 1

Occurrence of Teacher Talk During Each Phase of Group Development Listed in Percentages

Orientation	Disatisfaction	Resolution	Production
1. Classes 16.4	1. Productions 23.7	1. Productions 22.1	1. Productions 22.0
2. Personal Lives 12.3	2. Build/Supplies 9.9	2. Complaints 12.2	2. Personal Lives 10.4
3. Lunch/Cigarette 8.4	3. Complaints 9.6	3. Prob. Students 8.3	3. Complaints 9.6
4. Build./Supplies 8.1	4. Prob. Students 7.0	4. Personal Lives 8.2	4. Build/Supplies 8.3
5. Productions 7.0	5. Personal Lives 5.5	5. Classes 7.3	5. Jokes/Teasing 7.9
6. Students 6.7	6. Campus Events 5.2	6. Build/Supplies 6.2	6. Other Concerns 7.6
7. Jokes/Teasing 5.7	7. Paperwork 5.1	7. Students 5.3	7. Prob. Students 7.2
7. History 5.7	7. Classes 5.1	8. Paperwork 4.5	8. Campus Events 4.5
9. Campus Events 4.5	9. Other Concerns 4.8	9. Other Concerns 4.1	9. Phone Calls 3.3
10. Complaints 4.0	10. Students 4.2	10. Criticism 3.1	10. Classes 3.2

as department chair for the magnet, theatre facility manager, and lead teacher in the drama program area. Diane and Liz assumed the roles vacated by the teachers that left, namely the technical director/advanced magnet teacher and the director of the Repertory Company, respectively. They continued to ask questions about procedures in the program area. Christie and Warren tried to answer their questions by telling them how they thought their predecessors used to work.

Christie had participated in the staff development in the summer before the start of school while Warren was working in the district office. At that time, she had rewritten the curriculum; she made it her task to orient Liz and Diane to the curriculum and tried to help them out by suggesting what they should be teaching when. Christie came to see the curriculum as her territory and she was reportedly unhappy when the two new teachers made changes or did not teach certain units.

Since Diane was hired as the technical director, Christie drafted her help on her first production with the beginning students. She and Diane traded students; Diane taught technical units to the beginning students and Christie taught theatre history to the advanced students and sometimes to the Repertory Company, which was Liz's class. All three combined efforts on a musical theatre unit.

During this period sources of conflict were identified in private conversations between teachers and with the researcher. But they didn't become public or in some cases erupt until well into November and December. Some of the dissatisfaction was a result of status conflicts among the three women. Liz and Christie seem to battle over the position of seniority in the program area. Diane was unhappy with her status as new teacher and low person on the totem pole and tended to play the deserter role in program area meetings (Table 2). Members of the group began to perceive that Liz might not fit their definition of a team player because she did not freely volunteer to help with Christie's productions. In addition, the students in the Repertory Class began to complain to the office that they did not like Liz and they wanted to get rid of her. Liz and Diane were evaluated by Joe Forde during this period. Forde was not happy with Liz's teaching and recommended that she work with the staff development director. Just before the Christmas break the other three teachers confronted Liz during a program area meeting

Table 2

Mean Percentage of Teacher Talk During Department Meetings

Teacher	Before RIF 9/27-2/23	During RIF 4/9	After Final RIF 4/23-5/21	Total for Year
Warren	31	27	31.3	30.7
Christie	26.5	31	29	27.4
Liz	24.2	28	13.6	22.2
Diane	12.8	11	19	14.1
Unison	6.7	3	7	6.5

Note: RIF is the abbreviation for Reduction in Force, a notice given by a school or school district telling a teacher that his or her teaching position will not be renewed for the following year.

about, among other things, her failure to keep the costume shop clean even though the scene shop (Diane's job) and the script library (Christie's job) were also in disarray.

Stage Three: Resolution January 8-March 14, 1991

Christie, Diane, and Liz ceased trying to work together on any classroom projects, each concentrating instead on working with her own class. The program area as a whole was involved with other magnet teachers in the production of the magnet musical although the play was produced and directed by one of the music teachers. The performance went well even though the drama teachers felt that cast members from the Rep. Co. had behaved badly and had embarrassed the program area. As Table 1 indicates, complaints about the school in general and about the students in Liz's class became their most dominant form of conversation. The teachers were also spending less time together during 4th and 5th period. Table 3 demonstrates the decrease in teacher-teacher interactions in relation to teacher-researcher interactions. Toward the end of this time, Joe Forde met with the teachers again to try to get a commitment from them concerning their plans for a spring play. Warren and Christie perceived that he did this because he no longer believed that they could handle things on their own. Just before spring break both new teachers received Reduction in Force (RIF) notices.

Stage Four: Production April 2-May 21, 1991

The teachers, as a group, became much more productive during this period. This happened in part because Diane, even though RIFed, was allowed to "rollover" into another department, and was informed that she would still be kept in the drama program area. Liz, on the other hand, received a final RIF notice. At that point, Liz ceased contributing to the group while Diane began to contribute more (see Table 2). The three remaining teachers then functioned together with moderate efficiency.

Rather than produce a spring play which would involve students from both advanced magnet groups, Liz and Diane planned one-act plays with their individual classes. Four days prior to performance, the Repertory Company voted not to perform their one-act. All the other major activities of the magnet program were completed during this period which ended with the Magnet Awards Ceremony. The outstanding drama student award went to a student in Diane's class rather than to one

Table 3

Comparison of Teacher-Teacher Interactions to Teacher-Research Interactions

	Forming	Storming	Norming	Performing
Teacher-Teacher Interactions	79.5	100.7	73.8	41.4
Teacher-Researcher Interactions	19	29.2	33.7	33.4
Approximate Ratios: Teacher-Teacher to Teacher-Researcher	4-1	3-1	2-1	1-1

Note: Numbers represent mean numbers of all interactions per visit occurring during that phase.

in the Repertory Company. Apart from the final exams, the ritual of the end-of-the-year awards seemed to form a natural concluding point for the school year.

Stage Five: Termination May 23-May 28, 1991

This group did not experience the typical sadness and sense of loss normally expected with the ending of a group. The teachers were relieved to have the school year behind them; furthermore, they were glad to have gotten through it and were already looking ahead to future plans.

Conclusions About the Development of the Group

Aborted orientation phase. In many ways this group of theatre teachers was doomed even before it began. Because the teachers were brought together so close to the start of classes and were immediately moved into the pressing concerns of teaching, they did not take the time to come together as a group or even perceive that they needed to think of themselves as a team. They all realized that their program area was handicapped because it formed so late, but they seemed to perceive that this handicap was something to endure and not something to overcome.

Wilson and Hanna (1990) comment that if a group does not give full attention to the forming or orientation stage, it may move directly into the conflict stage. This seems to have been what happened with the theatre teachers. The teachers did not spend any time at the beginning of the year setting goals or priorities for themselves and the program area or talking about how they might work together. As a result, they had little mutual understanding of what their tasks were, let alone how they could achieve them together. More importantly, they did not have time to learn more about one another and to begin to build bonds of trust and cohesiveness that this self-disclosure brings.

Group development arrested in the conflict stage. It seems likely that the development of this group was arrested in the conflict stage. This disruption appeared to exist along both the task and interpersonal dimensions of the group. The teachers, for example, did not develop any mechanisms which would help the program area work together on projects. Christie and Diane did learn to work together to plan a production. But the program area as a whole was not observed planning anything as a group, including how they would work on the musical, until the end of the year when they planned for

the spring play and for the magnet awards. Both of these events took place after Liz had removed herself from the group. Therefore, it seems possible that the *affective* conflict or the conflict stemming from the interpersonal dimension (Guetzkow & Gyr, 1954) was never resolved and this in turn affected the task dimension.

When members of a group experience affective conflict, they often withdraw and avoid contact with one another and the person who seems to be at the heart of the problem. As was discussed above, there is considerable evidence to show that the drama teachers did just that. The teachers seemed to want to avoid Liz most of all, but they also avoided each other. By March the researcher seldom found two teachers together and often found that the drama area and teachers' offices were deserted during lunch and a search had to be made to find the teachers.

Wilson and Hanna (1990) note that while there are many approaches that members of a group can take to reduce tensions within the group, in the long run conflicts are not likely to disappear on their own. The group will have to confront the problems, seek to maintain a supportive and non-defensive climate, and work out acceptable solutions. Otherwise these *escalating* or unresolved conflicts (Deutsch, 1973) will continue to disrupt a group and prevent the group from developing any cohesiveness.

As was reported earlier, the drama teachers seemed to have two deviant members. Diane was viewed as a deserter. She sometimes did not participate in meetings and declared strongly that she would not work with Liz's group. Both Christie and Warren reported that they had said something to Diane about participating in meetings more. Despite this, Diane did not change her behavior until she had enough experience in the group to feel more a part of it and got a little more control over her own activities. In the fall she had told by Christie and Warren to work with Christie on the beginning magnet shows and with Liz on the mainstage show. She was not able to develop any projects of her own until the second semester. When this happened, and when she began to see that her students were doing well, and that the administration seemed committed to keeping her at Valley Vista, Diane's participation in group meetings changed. She still, however, refused to work with Liz's students. Both Christie and

Warren seemed to accept Diane's declaration. No one reported talking to her about the value of the advanced students working together.

Liz, on the other hand, was not viewed as a team player. According to the others, she did not use her time to help others and she did not keep up her obligations in the program area, specifically to maintain the costume shop. No one reported talking to her about this privately. She was, however, confronted with these shortcomings several times in program area meetings when there was both a researcher and a student observer from the university present, a condition which seemed to assure that a defensive climate would be promoted. These were the only times that the group, as a group, ever made any attempt to bring Liz into line. There is a distinct possibility that they stopped after the December meeting because the researcher had said something at the time. Christie for one reported later that this made her feel that she was being mean. It is possible that if Warren had spoken to Liz later privately, she might have been able to save face and bring her actions more into line with group norms and group expectations. It is also entirely possible that no one in the group knew how to confront a problem with a peer and to successfully manage conflict. As it was, Liz was completely pushed out of the group, rejected by all concerned.

What can be learned from the resolution stage? Bird and Little (1985) defined a group norm as the expected behavior for those in a group. They further noted that there was an acceptable range of behavior within that norm. It seems possible that Diane's deserting behavior, while not totally conforming to the norm, was within the acceptable range. Of particular concern to this research is the acceptance by Warren and Christie of Diane's desire to work alone. Valley Vista is a school that claims to promotes collegiality and teamwork and yet the teachers in the program area saw that it was perfectly acceptable to work alone. Perhaps autonomy and independence were more the norm for Valley Vista than collegiality and interdependence. Another reason that Warren and Christie tolerated Diane's behavior could stem from the fact that they liked Diane and had from the job interview. While each of the three reported finding many likeable qualities in Liz, none of them appeared to like her well enough

to tolerate her behavior, to give her support, or to offer her a safe climate to reform her behavior and become part of the group.

Low morale in the production stage. As was described earlier, the drama teachers began the last few months of school with very low group morale and commitment to the group. And yet there is evidence to suggest that program area meetings had become more interactive and more efficient. For example, there was more participation from Diane in group meetings and the program area actually met to plan what they all could do for the last productions. They also met, as a group, to decide on some of the awards at the end of the year. The teachers still continued to spend a lot of time talking about problem students (7.2%) and complaining (9.6%). They did spend more time in this period exchanging personal information (10.4%) and joking and teasing with one another (7.9%). These latter categories of talk indicate that the teachers now might be giving more attention to strengthening their interpersonal bonds, an activity that had been crowded out by the immediacy of events and conflicts earlier in the year.

Despite the fact that the teachers were operating more efficiently as a program area, they did not appear to perceive that they had improved. If anything, they tended to perceive that the group had not worked well at all. One factor that might account for that is that the teachers did not develop any mechanisms for analyzing their own group process. In fact, they were not observed assessing and reevaluating anything that they had done together as a group including, for example, how they had worked to prepare a show. Wilson and Hanna (1990) stress that it is important for group members to take time to analyze and evaluate how well they are working together. Feedback from an outside observer on their group process is also important to the group.

Termination stage. The teachers, while finding this year to be a particularly trying one, did find mechanisms to survive. They ended the school year feeling that the worst was behind them and they were all looking forward to summer and a chance to make a new beginning in the fall. The question might be asked, though, what kind of scars will they carry with them from this year? Will any of these

teachers ever want to try working in a teacher group again? The answers to these questions have yet to be determined.

Describing the events of the 1990-91 school year is only part of the story. Because teacher workgroups, like most self-managing groups, exist in the context of an organization, it is necessary to look at the organizational factors that contributed to the creation and development of this teacher workgroup.

Organizational Factors Affecting the Group

Four factors stemming directly from the organization of the school itself seemed to have been instrumental in preventing this group from developing effectively. First, no attention was given to building a team during the crucial orientation phase; therefore, the group did not have a structure that would allow them to work together. This actually made it easier for them to work alone when they encountered problems. Second, the extent and limits of the team's authority was never established; consequently, the teachers never perceived that they had control over their own program area. Third, no training or coaching was provided to teachers which would enable them to understand how groups work and help them work well in teams. Fourth, outside leadership intervention on the part of the assistant principal not only failed to resolve any of the conflicts within the group, but actually served to reinforce the belief within the group members themselves that they were failing as a program area. Each of these factors will be discussed below.

No Attention to Building a Team

The early stages of team building seem to involve three things (a) selecting team members early, (b) calling the team members together to begin orientation, (c) defining or helping group members define the team task and expectations for work on the task.

Getting a team in place early. The first step in building a team is to get the team members in place and begin orientation before they actually have to begin their work. A logical time to do this with a teacher workgroup would have been a week or so prior to the start of school. Unfortunately, hiring teachers at the eleventh hour, as was the case at Valley Vista, seems to be typical of most schools. More

importantly, hiring faculty early may not even be perceived as a priority. Joe Forde, assistant principal for the magnets, stated that "My goal [for hiring all new teachers] is the first day of school, let alone the in-service week" (I-8/19/91). Because there was no lead-in time for the program area, the teachers had to begin dealing with classroom pressures immediately and this took precedence over building a team.

Set initial meetings. Both Joe Forde and Warren Davis stated that they wanted to take a democratic approach to the teachers in the program area. Therefore, they felt it best to leave the teachers alone and let them work things out among themselves. As a result, there was no one assuming responsibility for pulling the group together initially and there was no one to orchestrate conversations about how the teachers might be working together. Hackman (1990) found that this misinterpretation of a democratic leadership style was a common managerial error. Managers often assume that by working together members will evolve any structures that the team needs. Hackman found, and this study seems to support that finding, that the reverse is usually true. A group will find it very difficult to evolve its own structure if some ground work has not already been laid.

Defining team tasks and roles. When group members first come together, they are experiencing high motivation and excitement about the operation of the team but uncertainty concerning how they are to go about working together. It is important, then, that outside leadership provide the team with some structure at this point, outlining the team's duties and responsibilities and helping them learn to work together (Carew, Parisi-Carew, & Blanchard, 1986). Hackman (1990) explains further, "Groups that have appropriate structures tend to develop healthy internal processes, whereas groups with insufficient or inappropriate structures tend to have process problems" (p. 498).

Because all four teachers were taking on new roles, they all experienced a period of anxiety as they began to unlearn the old role and then relearn the new one (Louis, 1980). Christie was the only one who had on hand the person who played her role before her. It was clear that no one was really sure how the previous Repertory Director and Technical Director had worked. The two previous teachers had different skills and interests than did Liz and Diane. It apparently never occurred to the group to sit down and determine what the program area needed to do and then find a way to go about it

using the personnel they now had. It is possible that in discussing the jobs that needed to be done within the program area, the group would have also arrived at some agreement about the level of effort that was expected from each group member.

Since there was no one helping to shape their collective understanding of their new roles, the teachers created their own individual definitions. Problems later occurred when one person's interpretation did not match that of another. Because the group had no mechanisms for interaction, it had no way to confront and solve these conflicts. These conflicts further prevented a group from forming.

It seems likely that one flaw in the design of the drama program area in the 1990-91 school year was that the teachers did not share students as they had done in previous years. A self-managing group, it should be recalled, has a shared task. As a result, each teacher came to see her class as her own private domain. The expectation, however, that each would help others with productions still seemed to exist although it remained unspoken until December.

As was discussed earlier, teachers from ineffective schools, schools where there is low goal consensus, experienced uncertainty about their teaching and consequently spent large portions of their time avoiding talk about school (Little, 1982; Rosenholtz, 1989). These characteristics to some extent described the teacher talk of theatre teachers at Valley Vista. Table 4 illustrates the topics of teacher talk for the year. The largest topic of conversation among the teachers was about productions or projects coming up. This can be expected in a performance oriented program. But it also indicates that the teachers were always concerned with the immediate moment and did not get to the place where they felt in control of the events around them until the end of the year. Many of the other topics found in Table 4 relate directly to keeping each other informed about things happening both in the program area and on campus.

In contrast to the negative talk which made up about 20% of the total talk, the teachers only spent about 7% of their time in any sort of positive talk. Most of this talk was in the form of joking or teasing. Giving support or feedback to one another, one sign of teacher collaboration and group

Table 4

Mean Percentage of Teacher Talk for Year Listed in Rank Order

Rank	Type of Talk	Average for the Year
1	Productions	21.9
2	Complaints	10.0
3	Building/Supplies/Budget	8.4
4	Personal Lives	7.8
5	Problem Students	7.0
6	Classes	5.9
7	Other Concerns	5.2
8	Students	4.3
8	Campus Events/Meet.	4.3
8	Paperwork	4.3
11	Jokes/Teasing	3.9
12	Using Phone/Messages	3.2
13	Giving Support/Feedback	2.5
14	Criticism	2.3
15	Getting Lunch/Cigarette	1.8

Table 4 (cont).

Rank	Type of Talk	Average for Year
16	Requesting Help	1.5
17	Administrators/Teacher Evaluation	1.4
18	History	1.3
19	Parents	1.1
20	Good Students	.7

cohesiveness, occupied only 2.5% of their teacher talk. They seldom collaborated with one another in the classroom and they did not observe each other's classes.

Rosenholtz (1989) found that in some low goal consensus schools, the teachers did not talk to one another at all, a situation which contributed significantly to their sense of isolation and alienation. It is therefore important to note that by the second semester, the amount of time that the teachers spent talking to one another had greatly decreased. As Table 3 demonstrates, the teachers began to spend increasingly more time talking just to the researcher and not to one another. The teachers stopped spending time together during lunch time. Part of this time they were busy with their own productions, but a lot of this time they were avoiding one another.

This decrease in teacher talk is both the result of low cohesiveness among the teachers and the cause of continued decreases in cohesiveness. It should also be pointed out that the teachers' office space was spread out. Only Diane and Liz were in the same office. This was another barrier to their interaction and cohesiveness. People who are in close proximity to one another interact and people who are not, don't (Forsyth, 1990).

The attitudes that Diane, a first year teacher, adopted concerning teaching and learning indicate that the norms of teacher collaboration were not strong in the theatre program area. What Diane ultimately learned from her first year of teaching was that, "You really truly do have to rely on yourself, and that you have got to look out for number one" (I-5/23/91). In contrast to what the official line is about teacher collegiality and teamwork at Valley Vista High School, there seems to be another reality, or at least there was for the teachers in the theatre program area that year. Diane did not learn to value teamwork and collegiality. On the contrary, what Diane learned about teaching from her first year at Valley Vista is that teaching is a lonely, independent, uncertain job where the only person you have to rely on is yourself.

Establish Limits and Extents of the Team's Authority

A crucial element of team building that is repeated often in Hackman's (1990) analysis is that group members must accept the idea that they are both responsible and accountable for the actions of

the group. He points out further that this can present some difficulties in workplaces, like schools, where independence and autonomy are often the norm. This is also a crucial aspect of changing the structure in schools to give the teachers more power.

There is evidence to suggest that the theatre teachers did not believe that they were either responsible or accountable for what happened in their program area. This can be demonstrated most clearly in their attitude about the behavior of the students in the program area. Throughout the year the teachers complained that many of the students, especially in the Repertory Company, were irresponsible and that their behavior was unprofessional and embarrassing to the program area. Yet none of them saw that they, as the program area, were responsible for the behavior of the students, and instead they deflected the blame to the student's parents, to the administration, or to Liz.

When Joe Forde met with the teachers in October he told them that this was their program area and they were in charge of what happened there. This message would have done much more good if it had been given to the teachers early in the year instead of after 7 or 8 weeks had gone by. Hackman (1990) notes that where independence in the workplace has been the rule, the outside manager must often use both repetition and persuasion to convince group members that authority is theirs. If the teachers had discussed their expectations for student behavior and how they intended to communicate this to the students and what actions they were going to take as a program area earlier in the year, then there would have been more chance for the program area to see results.

What happened with the students in the Repertory Company is a good example of what Nespor (1986) termed "the economy of blame." When teachers or administrators cannot escape, protest, or control a situation, they shift the blame to other quarters. The administration seemed to say to the teachers that the students were the program area's responsibility and should be controlled there, the other teachers said that the students were Liz's responsibility and then blamed the administration for not backing them up, and finally Liz blamed the students and said that no one could have done anything to help those students. No one was in a winning situation and the best recourse was to get rid of Liz.

One of the ironies of this study is that, in a school which claims to promote teacher empowerment, events in the formation of this teacher workgroup actually had the opposite effect. The teachers virtually seemed to stop believing in themselves as capable of being successful; there were too many barriers beyond their control. They seemed to have taken on the characteristics of "learned helplessness" as described by Abramson (1978) and no longer believed that anything they could do would make any difference in the group.

No Training and Support

Murphy (1991) states that several different types of training seem to be needed to help school personnel work in restructured schools. The first centers on substantive issues which will enable personnel to take on new roles and responsibilities, for example, mentoring a beginning teacher. A second he describes as training in process skills, such as strategies for conflict resolution and in group process, which will be needed to help teachers exercise these new functions.

Apart from staff development offering training in classroom procedures, Valley Vista at the time of this study, provided no training of any type to teachers. Team training for those teachers working in cores was begun in the spring of 1991, but there was no training in group process or decision making skills available to teachers elsewhere on campus. In addition, there was no help available when the theatre teachers began to experience conflicts within the group.

The theatre teachers seemed to have very little understanding of the decision-making process or the group roles that facilitate that process. Discussion of topics during program area meetings was very inefficient. The teachers often seemed to make decisions without fully examining the problem itself or the consequences of their decisions. Sometimes topics had to be discussed over a period of two or three weeks because the program area had either failed to come to a decision or the decision had not been a good one. In addition, the roles that the members of the group tended to play during meetings seemed to support the idea that the members of the group were more oriented toward independent rather than cooperative concerns. For example, there was a high incidence of self-centered roles such as the deserter or the special interest pleader (Benne & Sheats, 1948).

It is important to note also that Valley Vista had no program for mentoring new teachers. It was the belief of Joe Forde that, because the magnet teachers had been a part of the new teacher interview and selection process, they already had enough commitment to that new teacher to participate in his/her orientation. But this was merely assumed not carried out in any systematic way. No training was available to help teachers learn to recruit or tutor their students or take on any of the other specialized roles that both magnet and non-magnet teachers were expected to play. There was no training for teachers like Warren who took on teacher-administrator positions. Comments made by Joe Forde on the subject seemed to indicate that special training was not needed; these teachers learned the job by doing it.

Leadership Intervention

Hackman (1990) found that there are several points during the life of a group when the intervention of outside leadership can be productive. One of these is when a group is first formed, but, as was already discussed above, no one actively organized this group. A second time is after the group has completed some phase of their work. For example, the teachers might have discussed their group progress after the first grading period or after the first series of productions. This did not occur. The teachers stated that they didn't stop to evaluate their group process because they didn't feel that they had the time.

Managers often do not intervene until a group is experiencing trouble. Hackman (1990) warns that interventions at times of crisis can be detrimental because "such an action can confirm member's worst fears about the group and thereby have an effect opposite to the one intended" (p. 483). Both Christie and Warren felt defeated when Joe Forde sat down with the theatre teachers to straighten out their plans for the spring play. Christie summed up how she and Warren felt about that meeting, "It made me feel like a failure. It made me feel like Warren and I just couldn't handle it, and that's what the administration perceived" (I-5/24/91). These managerial interventions on the part of Joe Forde seriously undermined the self-esteem and confidence of the teachers in the theatre program area and decreased rather than increased the effectiveness of the team itself.

Effect of the School Reform Process on the Development of the Group

Problems Stemming from the Design of the Change Effort

Murphy (1991) found school restructuring involves additional time and effort from teachers, administrators, and students. Time also has to be made available for teachers to work together. When he described how the Valley Vista PLAN was created, Joe Forde stated that a key element was to give the teachers more time. But the provision of released time alone does not insure that teachers will use it for its designed purpose. According to Crandall, Eiseman, & Louis (1986), teachers are concerned with the immediate and concrete needs of the classroom. Give a teacher more time, then, she will likely use it in some work with her students or in planning and preparation of classroom materials. This was the case in the theatre program area.

Even though the teachers had been provided with released time during the day, they did not perceive that this time should be used for teachers meetings. This may have been related to a reluctance to work together because of interpersonal conflicts. It is also possible that time was not spend talking together, especially early in the year, because the teachers did not realize that this interaction was directly related to the group process.

Despite this fact that the press of activities within the program area was greatly decreased in 1990-91 compared to what it had been the previous year, all the teachers complained that they did not have time to do many of the things they needed to do. They did have the time, but for them it was more important to use it working with students or in some other way rather than with each other. In addition, many of them found working with students more pleasant and rewarding than teacher teamwork.

Threats to Institutionalization

As was discussed earlier, there are several types of threats to the institutionalization of a reform effort. One of these occurs when key personnel leave the school resulting in a loss of leadership and momentum in the program. Another occurs from the dynamics of the change process itself.

Loss of key personnel. Louis and Miles (1990) note that an innovative effort is often left leaderless when key personnel leave the school. Fullan (1982) reported that effective change depends on interaction among the users, but the removal of key users weakens conditions that would incorporate or help new members. A turnover in staff interrupts the build up of trust occurring from long periods of interaction and decreases the potential for development of sustaining relationships (Louis & Miles, 1990). Both situations could be found at Valley Vista when Marty Cooper and Carolyn Farmer, the two previous teachers, decided to leave; this departure created a leadership void in both the drama program area and the Performing Arts magnet.

While Valley Vista had a history of high turnover in administrative personnel, the resignations of Marty and Carolyn marked the first teacher turnover of any size in the Performing Arts magnet. The teachers who had left previously tended to be ones that did not seem to fit into to the magnet program and had asked or been asked to transfer elsewhere. It is likely, therefore, that the school had no mechanism to deal with a significant voluntary teacher turnover in teachers who were active leaders in their program area.

Most of the business of the drama program area had been carried out by Marty and Carolyn and Warren and Christie seemed to have little or no idea of how they actually handled things. Forde stated that it had been a mistake on his part to "keep them in the back seat the whole time" and not to "develop them to take over responsibility wise." He also said that he hadn't anticipated and made plans for the fact that both Marty and Carolyn might leave at the same time (I-8/19/91).

Because Marty was under a lot of stress just before the end of the school year, she failed to make any provisions for her replacement. For example, Marty left very few records about where she took touring shows and who she contacted once she got there. As a result Liz, who had just moved to Southwest City, had very little to go on when she went to plan touring shows of her own.

Replacing Marty as program manager was a problem because there were several strong factions in the magnet. In particular there were conflicts and resentments between the music program area and the other teachers. Joe Forde decided not to fill that position and assumed those responsibilities

himself. Eventually it became clear that he expected Warren to take on many of the program manager's duties.

Warren had become the magnet department chair primarily because he was acceptable to all the teachers. But Warren was the most experienced teacher in the theatre program area; pulling him out to serve as department chair and theatre manager further depleted the leadership resources available to the drama teachers. Warren also stopped teaching magnet students and was now teaching one non-magnet class. There is a difference between the magnet and the non-magnet teachers. During the previous year Christie had complained that her non-magnet status made her feel like an outsider. It is possible, then, that Warren felt a diminished responsibility to the curricular matters of the magnet classes because he was now a non-magnet teacher. Of equal importance was the fact that the program area for all intents and purposes lost Warren's technical expertise. This left Diane as the primary technical resource in the program area, but Diane was a first year teacher and, as it turned out, she was not that confident of her technical skills.

Dynamics of the change process. Louis and Miles (1990) note that after the initial enthusiasm for the change effort, there is often a stand-still or resting phase in the change process itself. As was discussed earlier, there is some evidence to suggest that the faculty experienced something of a let down in 1990 after two years of positive feelings of success. The spring prior to Marty's departure had been a particularly hectic period of time. After two intense years of the implementation of the PLAN, everyone seemed to need a rest by the summer of 1990. Unfortunately this is just when the drama program area needed special attention because half the program area had to be replaced.

It should be recalled that the change process quite often lasts a long time, anywhere from 5 to 10 years; and is, therefore, a long term commitment (Louis & Miles, 1990; Murphy, 1991). In addition, a school planning a reform effort needs to "develop a time frame that is sufficient to ensure that complex changes can unfold and begin to produce desired outcomes" (Murphy, 1991, p. 89). Because of the desegregation order, the Southwest City High School District had a mandated time frame in which to bring all schools into compliance with the court order. But the pressure to comply with a Federal Court

order, coupled with the enormous sums of money being spent at Valley Vista and the high visibility that the school has in the community and the media, have created an atmosphere there which is very intense.

Conclusions and Implications

There are several conclusions that can be drawn from this study concerning the use of self-managing groups in schools; these conclusions in turn have implications for those who plan to develop teacher workgroups in the future. The first is that teamwork is not just a word, it's an attitude and a way of life. Secondly, some understanding of and training in group process is necessary for groups to function effectively. Third, the interpersonal relationships that have to exist for a team to operate successfully cannot be ignored. Some conclusions need also to be made concerning the level of institutionalization of the Valley Vista PLAN.

Teacher Teamwork and Collegiality is a State of Mind

There is much more to creating teamwork and collegiality among teachers than simply stating that it exists or expecting it to happen. Building a team in any setting takes time and effort and some knowledge of both group process and the characteristics of an effective group. There is evidence (e.g., Ashton & Webb, 1986; Little, 1982; Rosenholtz, 1989) to suggest that teachers who work in effective schools, i.e., schools where students score high on standardized tests, display the same characteristics as the members of effective workplace teams (e.g. Hackman, 1990; Owens, 1991; Poza & Markus, 1980). Therefore, it seems logical that those in schools that seek to improve student achievement should give some conscious effort to team building among the faculty and administration.

A team attitude. First and foremost teachers who work in teams need to think of themselves as part of a team. Commitment to a group and to the good of the group does not mean that each teacher conforms to some sort of collective mentality, but it does mean that the teachers create a shared sense of purpose. Instead of each teacher work with her class completely on her own, she has the sense that everyone else is working toward the same end. And because everyone is on the same side, she realizes that she can seek assistance from others and is willing to give assistance as well (Rosenholtz, 1989).

The theatre teachers in this study, for example, never really thought of themselves as people united for a common purpose--to train good drama students. The members of the drama program area did not develop shared goals and a shared sense of purpose. They also did not have a shared sense of responsibility for the program or a shared sense of empowerment to operate their own program area. They did not see their teaching and production tasks as interdependent and tended, as a result, to work more or less independently. They did not give each other feedback and they seemed to think that they either could only rely on themselves or that they were dealing with a situation beyond their control. The only thing they experienced in common, then, was a sense of frustration, helplessness, and failure.

Group process. There are three important aspects of teacher teamwork that have to be considered--the task of the group, the process of working as a member of a group, and the interpersonal relationships among members that need to exist in order to promote commitment to one another. Teachers first have to understand what their task is and have to understand and willingly accept the fact that this task is much broader than their work with their students in their classrooms.

Groups work differently than individuals. Those who are supposed to function as a group should have some knowledge of how groups can be expected to work and have some way to evaluate their own progress as a group. Staff development aimed at group training need not be extensive or exhausting. Working together in a group should, in fact, be stimulating and self-sustaining, not the other way around (Hackman, 1990).

Team building takes time and effort. It takes time for the members of the group to learn to work together and create group roles that facilitate the decision making process and maintain interpersonal relationships (Wilson & Hanna, 1990). Creating group norms, or the expectations for behavior in a group (Bird & Little, 1985), also takes time. There is really only one way for a group to develop and that is through interaction. The members of a group have to talk to one another frequently in order to create and build up these communicative bonds (Fisher & Ellis, 1990). The members of a group need to spend some time evaluating their own group process, identifying aspects that are working well and looking for aspects that need improvement. Feedback about the group process is also

important to the development of a group. Therefore, a group could also benefit from the presence of an outside observer (O'Donnell, Dansereau, Hythecher, Larson, Rocklin, Lambiotte, & Young, 1986; Wilson & Hanna, 1990). For teacher work groups this could be the staff development director or the members of another teacher workgroup.

Interpersonal relationships. Schutz (1958) found that interpersonal compatibility was essential to the efficient operation of a group. The members of a group need to have their interpersonal needs for inclusion, control, and affection met by membership in a group. In other words, a group will work better if the members like one another and make an effort to make each other feel included and appreciated. This factor was not present with the teachers in 1990-91. Because the theatre teachers did not have a chance to get to know one another as they began to work together, they did not learn to appreciate one another. As a result, they experienced only defensiveness and loneliness instead of the positive support and comraderie that they could have found from their group.

It cannot be emphasized enough that intense interpersonal relations in a work place setting can be perceived as either punishment or reward. For the teachers in the Valley Vista drama program area, the interpersonal experience was a painful one whereas in the preceeding year the opposite was true. Careful team building increases the likelihood that positive interpersonal relationships will develop and that conflicts within in a group will be worked out to everyone's satisfaction. If no attention is given to team building, a good team might result if the right people happen to be brought together. It is just as likely, as the teachers found during the year of this study, that if no attention is given to team building the members of the team will find it difficult at best to work together.

The need for team building in schools. The current emphasis on building critical thinking skills in students emphasizes the fact that students who work together in groups often process information on a higher level than they can get from direct teaching in a classroom (e.g., Gage & Berliner, 1992). The same value can be said to result from teachers working together in groups. For example, teachers discussing how best to set up a curriculum for a three or four year drama program, would no doubt encounter some differences of opinion. In trying to sort out these differences they would come to see

each other's point of view and would probably adopt some ideas from one another. The end result would be two fold: a program that all could be committed to because all had some input and a program that everyone in the group understands and can carry out. Dissension during discussion promotes both better understanding of the ideas presented (Kahn, Calhoun, & Johannessen, 1984; Lindow, Wilkinson, & Peterson, 1985; Sharan, Kussell, Sharan, & Bejarano, 1984; Sharan & Shachar, 1988; Slavin, 1983; Weade & Green, 1985) and commitment to the decisions of the group (Wilson & Hanna, 1990).

There are several examples from the 1990-91 school year which point out that the new teachers did not fully understand either the goal of the drama program area itself or the Valley Vista PLAN. It seems likely that, apart from their interviews with the researcher, the two new teachers had not talked about the PLAN with anyone since their interviews and had no chance to gain any further understanding of what it was or how to implement it in their classes. It seems logical to conclude that promoting team work among teachers would promote both better development and execution of school and curricular programs.

Those who support group work for students note that students who have worked in groups have better self-esteem and confidence than those who have not (Sharan & Shachar, 1988; Webb, 1985). Group work is valuable because the students are active, not passive learners (Kindsvatter, Wilen, & Ishler, 1988). These same values can also be applied to teachers working together in groups. Teachers working in groups could experience greater understanding of those in other disciplines as well of teachers whose styles and attitudes are different from their own. Teachers should find that they enjoy their work more. Finding working with colleagues both stimulating and rewarding increases a teachers sense of intrinsic rewards. Teachers in successful work groups can find rewards from both their relationships with their students and their relationships with their peers.

So much is now known about how groups can operate effectively. Developing group building skills has also become an integral part of most business management courses. Teachers are urged to use groups in the classroom to promote critical thinking skills and foster higher order learning and transfer of learning. There is so much emphasis on participatory or site based management or developing teacher

collegiality or creating open schools where the decision making is from the bottom up and not from the top down, that it is almost ironic that small group communication is not part of most teacher training programs and also seems to be absent from certification programs for school administrators.

Institutionalization of the Valley Vista PLAN

One purpose of this study was to determine the level of institutionalization of the reform effort at Valley Vista High School which can be said to have occurred when the reform effort reaches the routine daily activities of the school (Elmore, 1988; Miles, 1983). Huberman (1983) added that a well designed innovation also has a positive effect on pupils and teachers.

One way to test this level of implementation is to determine what happens to new faculty. When new faculty join a school that has successfully implemented a reform effort, they should not only receive training and support that will allow them to "buy into" the plan (Crandall, Eiseman, & Louis, 1986), but they should also be socialized by the other faculty to fit in with the goals of the plan itself. The results of this study cast some doubt on the design of the Valley Vista reform effort. When Valley Vista planned its massive school reform effort during the summer of 1988, many new magnet teachers were brought it. An effort was made to have these new faculty in place early in the summer in order that they could work together to rewrite their curriculum. As was noted earlier, the need to hire new faculty early and to help them become part of the plan does not seem to have continued.

One deficiency in the design of the reform effort was in the area of training and orientation for newcomers. There did not appear to be any formal orientation or mentoring of new teachers beyond a day or two of in-service; consequently, whatever new teachers learn about the PLAN has to come from the socialization process itself. The two new theatre teachers did not learn much about the PLAN nor did they make much attempt to implement it in their daily teaching. What is more important is that only one of the two returning teachers continued to implement the PLAN. The theatre program area's attention to the Valley Vista PLAN actually seemed to regress rather than progress.

Another aspect of the restructuring effort of concern here is that the teachers at Valley Vista are supposed to develop more collegial bonds as the result of, among other things, the restructuring of

the school day. It was demonstrated that the theatre teachers did not perceive that their released time should be used for collegial meetings, and, more importantly, they failed to form any sort of cohesive team. In the end their experience was not the positive one Huberman envisioned above, but was rather negative. In addition, many of the students, particularly those in the Repertory Company, did not have a positive year either. It seems possible that the Valley Vista reform effort may not be achieving significant changes in the nature of teaching and learning.

Murphy (1991) noted that a key factor of a school structuring effort has to include changing the power structure of the schools, specifically enabling the teachers to have and use more power. Valley Vista states that it does that; it claims, for example, to employ site-based management. But the results of this study indicate that while individual departments are, or at least can be, some what autonomous, Valley Vista has still retained the traditional hierarchy of most urban high schools. The teacher surveys discussed earlier indicated that the teachers, especially the non-magnet teachers, were beginning to feel less and less a part of the operation of the school. It was clear in this study that the theatre teachers did not become empowered over the course of the year; on the contrary, they actually seemed to become more helpless. Furthermore, they did not perceive that they had the administration's support. It is possible that as long as a department can operate on its own without causing the administration any problems, then it is left alone to do what it wants. If a department has trouble, however, the administration, already bogged down operating a large high school, seems to want little part in fixing the problems. They would rather ignore these problems and hope they go away, or find some way to get rid of the teachers who cause the problems. This is exactly the way traditionally organized, paternalistically hierarchical schools operate (Lortie, 1975; Rosenholtz, 1989).

Granted this study took an in-depth look at one rather small program area of a very large high school. It is also likely that what transpired in the theatre program area during the 1990-91 school year was virtually a worst case scenario. But this study indicated that certain structures were not in place at Valley Vista, structures that should have become "built in" if the reform effort had become institutionalized: (a) the lack of, or at least inconsistency in, continued aggressive efforts to hire new

faculty who "fit the profile" of the Valley Vista faculty, (b) the absence of any training or orientation to the PLAN or training in group process, and (c) the lack of any programs or policy to help develop and nurture teacher empowerment.

The results of this study seem to suggest further that two things that need to be considered by schools who are planning to institute reform efforts or who are in the midst of an restructuring program as is Valley Vista. Both of these suggestions stem from the same ideas--that a restructuring effort takes a long time to be completed and can be very labor intensive: (a) A reasonable pace should be set for accomplishing the goals of the program and mechanisms should be installed to monitor this pace and provide feedback for adjustments, and (b) allowances should be made for those times when a natural resting phase is entered.

In view of these findings it can be questioned whether attention to the Valley Vista PLAN, teacher collegiality, and teacher empowerment have become pervasive throughout the daily routines of the school. It can also be questioned whether a sense of shared goals and expectations for the students at Valley Vista High School exist. In short, it can be questioned whether the reform effort at Valley Vista as it stands now has become or will ever become institutionalized.

A Parting Comment

The ideal teacher workgroup is very cohesive, the members attracted to one like another magnets, pulling together for a common purpose. Unfortunately, those who work in schools are not lodestones, but human beings. And human nature, being what it is, cannot always be as controllable as an electromagnetic force. As this study has shown, humans, when they are threatened or uncomfortable, will seek to avoid what threatens or bothers them. What happens then is more a case of reverse polarity. Maybe Sarason (1990) is right when he says that most school reform efforts are doomed because they cannot overcome the powerful, repelling, and protective norms of teaching. But, as was mentioned above, if you take two magnets that are the wrong way around and reverse one of them, then you have a powerful attraction, a bond that is often very secure. Teachers, too, can be turned around reversing the polarity. It is not easy, as this study, has shown. But the results are worth it.

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